

MAINE B.A.S.S. FEDERATION NATION TOURNAMENT RULES

1) **Tournament Committee:**

The Committee shall be solely responsible for interpretation and enforcement of the rules and regulations. The Tournament Committee is eligible to participate in and compete for any and all prizes. The Committee's rulings shall be final except as defined by Maine State Law.

2) **Eligibility to participate in the Maine B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Fish Off**

It needs to be stated that every federation member in good standing with the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (Bassmaster Magazine), the National B.A.S.S. Federation Nation, the Maine B.A.S.S. Federation Nation and their Maine B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Club will be allowed/is encouraged to participate in the fish off. The good standing designation will be required at the same time that the Fish-Off registration forms/funds are required to be turned in.

Boater Eligibility:

*Boaters upon registering from their club must have available a functional watercraft and have a functional live well system with sufficient capacity that is capable of maintaining ten quality bass alive.

*Boats will need to be equipped with functional live well inlet screens (visual inspections should be expected).

*Boaters will be required to produce/submit with the registration forms a valid boater's insurance declaration page with a minimum of \$100,000 general liability listed for the boat to be used. Should the policy effective date expire prior to the date of the Fish Off, it will be the responsibility of the boater to produce and get to the Tournament Director an updated declaration page when available. Without this document in hand no boat will be allowed to be used in this competition.

3) **Registration:**

All competitors must check in at the tournament headquarters/weigh-in site one half hour before the start of the tournament. Boaters must float their boats prior to checking in. Only two competitors are allowed per boat. Teams shall remain the same throughout the day of competition.

4) **Check-In and Blast-Off:**

The order in which boats leave will be determined by the draw pairings list. No swapping of take off positions is permitted. In the event of a boat issue (motor failure, etc), the director can by pass that start position during blast off.

All boats are to be back no later than the end of tournament time given at the morning meeting. All fishing will cease upon returning to the official check-in point.

A one (1) pound per minute penalty shall be assessed to any team (from each members weight), who is late, up to fifteen (15) minutes. After fifteen (15) minutes the team will be disqualified.

Any waters shut off (designated as a no fishing area for that days competition), will be, prior to the start of each days event, discussed at the briefing.

In the event of a break down, competitors may board another boat with their fish to get back to the check-in on time. All fish brought on board by the competitors who are broken down shall be clearly marked or separated by the teams. The tournament Committee shall be notified of the circumstance immediately upon entering the check-in point. The team may retrieve the broken down boat after their fish are submitted for weigh-in.

All teams (the two paired to fish that day together) shall remain together upon checking in until their fish are weighed.

5) **Horsepower Limitations:**

The maximum horsepower for any competitor's boat shall not exceed 250 horsepower or the maximum rating listed on the U.S. Coast Guard rating plate attached to the boat.

6) **Safety:**

Safe boating must be observed at all times. Life vests must be worn and completely fastened at all times when combustion engine is running. For the purpose of this section, a life vest shall be required to be fastened and buckled and the engine kill switch connected to the operator at all times when the internal combustion engine is running. The following exceptions will apply: when a competitor's boat is anchored, moored, beached or tied to a dock, the internal combustion engine shall be allowed to run for the purpose of warming the engine, to keep batteries charged for the purpose of running the live wells to keep fish alive before weigh-in and/or when the competitor has weighed his/her fish and is placing the boat on the trailer. The Committee can delay the start and/or shorten the tournament day without making up the hours for safety related reasons.

7) **Sportsmanship:**

All competitors are required to comply with all Maine Fish & Wildlife Laws as well as State and local boating laws/rules and any other rules the Tournament Committee may impose. Competitors are required to follow and maintain the highest standards of sportsmanship and courtesy. Violation may result in disqualification.

No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs will be allowed in any competitor's boat. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs will be allowed at the weigh-in site or at the awards ceremony. Violators and others (individuals obviously under the influence) will be disqualified and forfeit any and all finish position, prize money(s) and or prizes.

8) **Permitted Fishing Locations:**

Fishing is permitted anywhere on tournament waters without taking the boat out of the water. Competitors must remain in the boat at all times except for an emergency (a restroom break necessitates an emergency). Competitors will maintain a fifty (50) yard distance from any other competitors or non-competitor boat that has the DC motor in the stowed position and an anchor in the water. No competitor at anchor will "wave in" or allow another competitor inside the fifty (50) yard area surrounding their boat. If a boat is anchored in or near a channel, another competitor may cross inside the fifty (50) yard zone to gain access to other water. The boat crossing the fifty (50) yard zone must pass at a reasonable and safe speed and may not fish inside this area when crossing through.

9) **Fish to be Weighed In/Scoring /Penalties:**

Only largemouth and smallmouth bass shall be submitted for weigh-in. Minimum length of either specie shall be twelve (12) inches. Anglers may bring in a maximum of five (5) fish to the scale. Culling of fish must be done immediately upon catching the next fish that puts the competitor over the limit. The culling of dead fish is permitted.

Fish eligible for lunker award will be presented at the weigh-in alive. Dead fish will not be eligible for lunker awards. Lunkers will be returned to the tournament waters alive unless requested by an agent of the Commissioner of Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife.

In addition to the penalties previously described above, others are as follows:

***Short fish:** short fish will not be weighed as part of the angler's bag and a one (1) pound penalty shall be assessed for each short fish brought in.

***Dead fish:** a .25 pound penalty shall be assessed for each dead fish brought in.

***Over the limit:** any competitor that brings in more than their limit shall have their creel culled down starting with the largest fish and continuing in this manner until the legal limit is reached.

10) **Live Well Requirements:**

All boats must be equipped with a suitable electric live well aeration system. The Tournament Committee shall permit coolers set up in such a fashion pending approval. Functional live well intake screens/filters/devices must be in place. The Tournament Committee shall reserve the right to disqualify or reject an insufficient live well system. See Boater Eligibility above for definition.

11) Tackle/Equipment/Fishing Methods:

Only bait casting, spinning and spin casting rods shall be allowed. Fly casting tackle shall be prohibited. Rod length shall not exceed ninety-six (96) inches. Only one (1) rod and reel shall be used by a competitor at any time. Other rods may be rigged and ready for use in the boat.

Only artificial lures may be used. Pork rinds and strips are considered to be artificial baits. No live bait shall be permitted on or in any competitor's boat, fishing line or hook. Landing nets will be allowed. Fishing shall be done in the conventional manner of casting and retrieving. The technique's known as "dead sticking" and "dragging a tube" shall be allowed (only one line can be wet at a time).

(12)Ties:

In the event of a tie for any position, the competitor with the most bass will be the winner. The second tie breaker if needed will go to the competitor who weighs in the heaviest single live (bass. If a tie still exists, prizes (if any) will be combined for the two places in contention and will be equally split between the tied competitors.

(13)Cut-Off:

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to enact an off limit period for tournament waters. During the cut-off period, it shall be considered a violation if any competitor or an agent of the competitor does any of the following: goes out on the tournament waters in any boat, goes swimming, snorkeling or scuba diving. It will be against the rules to: fly over the tournament lake in an aircraft for the purpose of finding fishing spots or navigational hazards, seek any information from a non-competitor pertaining to hazards, fishing spots or fish locations and/or to place markers on the tournament waters or it's shores for the purpose of locating fish and/or fishing spots during any off limits periods.

(14)Protests:

Protest must be brought to the attention of the Tournament Committee within thirty (30) minutes of the end of the fishing period/start of the weigh-in, which ever is later.

(15)Other Prohibited Help and Equipment:

The following are considered violations of fair sportsmanship standards and any competitor found utilizing such measures will be disqualified.

*No competitor may use a non-competitor to sit on or hold a fishing spot until the competitor arrives.

*No competitor shall use a cellular phone, two-way radio or any other means of mechanical and/or electrical communications to gather fishing information from another competitor or non-competitor. Use of such communication devices shall be limited to emergency situations. Any such devices shall remain off except for weather information channels.

(16)Tournament Day no shows:

First or second day no shows will put the organization in a serious dilemma. Thus unless life is lost, life is in jeopardy or a catastrophic incident were to occur less than 10 hours prior to the blast off all no shows will be without appeal disallowed entry into the following years Divisional Qualifier. All that is required is a phone call to eliminate the no show penalty from being invoked. For the 2010 Fish-Off a call and discussion with Jimmy Lowe @ 583-6945, cell: 232-7570 or Steven Wilson @ 247-2522 or cell: 671-2571 would be appropriate.

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to reject any application from any competitors who have been found in violation of the tournament rules and/or state laws.